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Security Council

Sixty-second year

Provisional

5669th meeting

Monday, 30 April 2007, 11.55 a.m.

New York

President:	Sir Emyr Jones Parry	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Belgium	Mr. Verbeke
	China	Mr. Liu Zhenmin
	Congo	Mr. Gayama
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Ghana	Mr. Christian
	Indonesia	Mrs. Asmady
	Italy	Mr. Mantovani
	Panama	Mr. Soler Torrijos
	Peru	Mr. Voto-Bernales
	Qatar	Mr. Al-Qahtani
	Russian Federation	Mr. Dolgov
	Slovakia	Mr. Burian
	South Africa	Mr. Kumalo
	United States of America	Ms. Wolcott Sanders

Agenda

The situation concerning Western Sahara

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2007/202)

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07-32348 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 11.55 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation concerning Western Sahara

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara (S/2007/202)

The President: I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Spain, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the consideration of the item, without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Yáñez-Barnuevo (Spain) took the seat reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The President: The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2007/238, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France, the Russian Federation, Spain, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. Members also have before them document S/2007/202, the report of the Secretary-General on the situation concerning Western Sahara.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it. Unless I hear any objection, I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I shall now give the floor to the representative of South Africa, who wishes to make a statement before the voting.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): I wish to refer the Council to the draft resolution before it on Western Sahara.

My delegation wishes to place on record that, with regard to the reference in the fifth preambular paragraph to the Council "welcoming serious and credible Moroccan efforts", our understanding is that the word "credible" does not imply that the plan presented by the Polisario Front — which is based on previous Security Council resolutions and the Charter of the United Nations — is therefore less credible. We regret that this word managed to stay in the draft resolution, because we believe that it conveys an unintended meaning: that one plan is more worthy than the other.

We also wish to place on record our view that the words "to move the process forward" are also unfortunate, in that they prejudge the situation that may be ahead of us. We are delighted that both Morocco and the Polisario Front have expressed their interest to meet and resolve the last colonial issue on the African continent. We look forward to the meetings with the Secretary-General and hope that they will produce results that will indeed bring about change for the people of Western Sahara.

Lastly, we regret that operative paragraph 2 simply states "Calls upon the parties". That, in our view, amends paragraph 47 of the report of the Secretary-General, which reads in part:

> "I recommend that the Security Council call upon the parties, Morocco and the Frente Polisario, to enter into negotiations without preconditions, with a view to achieving a just, lasting and mutually acceptable political solution that will provide for the self-determination of the people of Western Sahara."

We regret also that the Group of Friends, which produced this draft resolution, gave us less than 24 hours to decide on it. This is what sometimes causes the Council not to be viewed as more credible: some of us, who are not in these groups, are never given enough time to decide on such issues. We hope that in the future, those drafting resolutions will make room for the rest of us to fully participate. All we want is for the people of Morocco and the people of Western Sahara to come together and resolve their problems so

that the people of Western Sahara will one day exercise their right to self-determination.

We will support this draft resolution — reluctantly so — because we do not want to stand in the way of creating a platform whereby the Moroccan people and the people of Western Sahara will together have an opportunity to negotiate among themselves.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Belgium, China, Congo, France, Ghana, Indonesia, Italy, Panama, Peru, Qatar, Russian Federation, Slovakia, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President: There were 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1754 (2007).

The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 12 noon.